

Milford Great Pumpkin Festival

The 2004 Milford Great Pumpkin Festival

October, 8,9,10

A Traditional Event for Milford

Many, many thanks to all those who made this year's Pumpkin Festival a great success!

Over the past 15 years, the Milford Great Pumpkin Festival has grown to be a local and regional tradition. Originally begun to raise funds to restore the Town Hall Auditorium, Milford's Pumpkin Festival is today organized on behalf of the Town of Milford by the Milford Main Street Program Downtown Ongoing Improvement Team (DO-IT) and Souhegan Home & Hospice Care (SHHC) with the purpose of enhancing the quality of life in Milford, building community, and providing a place for residents and visitors to simply have fun. The Festival also serves the purpose of raising funds and awareness for these programs.

The Benefits of the Festival - Besides the obvious enjoyment derived from the weekend, this Festival has been a tremendous benefit to the town. The Festival generates valuable positive public relations, provides an attraction for bringing new customers to our local businesses and visitors to town, an opportunity for Milford non-profits organizations to raise money for their causes, and a venue for performances by local talent. Perhaps most importantly, the Festival provides residents a chance to gather together with their friends and neighbors to see the community in a more festive light.

As a fundraiser, the Festival has allowed the organizers the opportunity to accomplish a great deal for our community. Through the efforts of the Town Hall Auditorium Restoration Committee (THARC), the Auditorium was restored and the air conditioning system work completed. Once that was accomplished, Milford Main Street Program/DO-IT has used the funds generated to help coordinate renovations to the Oval area, such as installing new lighting, adding benches, bike racks, and trash barrels, planting gardens, hanging banners and holiday decorations, and promoting the downtown as the heart of our community by planning popular events and activities. SHHC has used their dollars raised to fund free necessary home health care service to Milford residents as well as care clinics. In 15 years, over \$330,000 has been raised, 100% of which has been reinvested back into the Milford community by these organizations.

Overview of the 2004 Festival - This year's Pumpkin Festival was a terrific success, thanks in part to three beautiful days of sun! Together we ran a safe and enjoyable weekend of family activities centered on the unique fall culture of New England.

The 2004 Festival included many of the events that had proven popular and successful in past years. The Festival began Friday with the traditional opening ceremony, which included the pumpkin runner and town hall lighting. This was followed by a musical performance by Tattoo, the haunted trail, and two Friday night shows. This year's show organizers were pleased to welcome STITCH, the very funny comedy stunt performer to the Town Hall Auditorium and also the three hilarious comedians from the North Shore Comedy Club to the Boys and Girls Club (former American Stage Festival). Saturday and Sunday's activities included favorites such as the great pumpkin weigh-in,

pumpkin painting, pumpkin carving demonstrations, pumpkin sales, arts & crafts fair and bake sale, scarecrow making, haunted trail, face painting and other children's activities, food vendors, waffle breakfast, chili round-up and much, much more.

The performance line up for 2004 once again included a fantastic mix of regional artists who provide Festival attendees with three days of high-quality acts. In addition to the above-mentioned performers, the line-up also included: The Peacock Players Strutters; Seth Connely; MC & Herb Archer; Steve Lechner; PB&J; Basil Harris; The Spicket River Bluegrass Band; Sloppy Joe; Rob Oxford; Ben Rudnick; Fuzzy Logic; Mike McGowan; Familiar Echoes; Amy Conley; Rob Kordas; Wildlife Refugees; Roberta Woolfson; The Flying Irish Dance Troupe; Uncle George; Rahel; and Melodies and Memories. It was a weekend packed full of great performances and fun for all ages.

The Value of Support - The Milford Great Pumpkin Festival would not be possible were it not for the support of the hundreds of volunteers who dedicated countless hours to ensuring that the event was a success. Their dedication, spirit and energy are all greatly appreciated. Invaluable support also comes from the Festival sponsors Ocean National Bank and Kokko Realty, and to individual event sponsors Alene Candles, St. Joseph Healthcare, Contemporary Chrysler/Dodge, BAE Systems, and Kowloon Wasabi Restaurant.

Each year, Milford police, ambulance, fire, and public works departments do a tremendous job of ensuring the success of the Festival by providing outstanding support services throughout the entire weekend. Their involvement in the Festival is made possible by funding that was approved by Milford voters in March 2004. We thank all residents who supported that article and encourage you to keep the spirit of the Pumpkin Festival and the spirit of Milford alive by voting to approve Town financial support of the Festival again this year.

On behalf of the Boards, staff and volunteers of the Milford Main Street Program DO-IT and Souhegan Home and Hospice Care, we are proud to be able to continue to offer this event to the community and look forward to seeing you at the 2005 Festival.

Respectfully Submitted,

On behalf of Milford DO-IT/Main Street Program and Souhegan Home & Hospice Care,

Alan Woolfson

President, Board of Directors, DO-IT/Main Street Program

Jessica Hejtmanek

Executive Director, DO-IT/Main Street Program

Henri LeBlanc

President, Board of Directors, Souhegan Home & Hospice Care

Dennis Van Zilen

Community Relations Manager, Souhegan Home & Hospice Care